GUIDE BOOK TO SARASVATI MAHAL LIBRARY





THANJAVUR MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S
SARASVATI MAHAL LIBRARY
THANJAVUR

Thanjavur Sarasvati Mahal Library Series No. 201

GUIDE BOOK
TO
SARASVATI MAHAL

BY

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Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji's
SARASVATI MAHAL LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE
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PREFACE TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

The Sarasvati Mahal Library is a renowned institution and repository of manuscripts, maps, paintings and old books. This Library is a centre where research scholars and students community find immense source of literary wealth for their research work. The Library Manuscripts are in palm leaf and paper and they deal with various subjects on Philosophy. Medicine, Astrology, Grammar, Folklore and Mythology. The main function of this Library is conservation, preservation and publication of manuscripts and to act as a fecilitation centre for litrary research.

The Publication of books from manuscripts is being done with the help of eminent scholars from various institutions and with the assistance of Pandits of the Library. The books are on varied subjects in different languages. So, Far 552 books have been published in five languages i.e., Sanskrit, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil and English.

We have invited reputed scholars to edit the titles from the 300 titles selected by expert committee so as to bring out books of scholarly output and content. It is planned to bring out at least 25 books every year. Besides, reprinted books of popular and best seller will be brought out.

This Library preserves the manuscript and documents in microfilm form and helps the research scholars by giving copies of manuscripts in microfilm form. Xeroxing facility in this Library helps the scholars to get copies of documents for their research work.

The Library has a museum containing rare manuscripts, books, drawings, pictures, paintings and other rare art collections which attract the scholars and visitors.

A National Mission for manuscript has been launched under the Government of India's Scheme for preservation of manuscripts. Our Library is given the privilege of a manuscript research centre and manuscripts collection centre. Around 15 seminars with the co-operation of Mutts, Universities and Colleges where conducted to make the public and students aware of the importants of collection and preservation of manuscripts.

In an attempt to give training to students/scholars in Tamil manuscripts, Grantha, Telugu, Marathi and Modi Languages, an ambitious training Programme is being conducted every year in the Language field.

I thank Mr. A. Panchanathan, Librarion Gr. I cum Publication Manager(Retired), and Thiru. M. Sankaranarayanan, Personal Assistant to Collector (General) and Administrative Officer of this Library and staff of Library for their efforts in bringing out the 7th edition in the form of computer type setting by using the copy printer. I hope that this book will be usefull to the readers to know the important aspects of TMSSM. Library.

Thanjavur
06.01.2014

Dr. N.SUBBAIYAN, I.A.S.,
District Collector and Director
Sarasvati Mahal Library.

GUIDE BOOK
TO
SARASVATI MAHAL

Sarasvati Mahal is a seat of learning
Where many a rare manuscript bear meaning
That is brought out on publication
Bearing the stamp of scholar mind's application !

Teeming visitors tell all about its reputation
That extents to more visitors earnest invitation,
Calling in to share the matchless treasure,
That never diminishes in the least measure !

Tanjore is renowned for her great art, culture and literature for over ten centuries. Successive generations of the Cholas, the Nayaks and the Marathas have enriched its cultural heritage. The Cholas contributed their magnificent temples, sculptures and paintings to enrich the culture of the Tamil. The nayaks who succeeded them postured and developed the study of Literature, Drama, Music and its arts. The Marathas and their successors followed their suite, conserved and improved the legacies of their predecessors. Many Maratha Kings were great scholars and good writers themselves. Sarasvati Mahal Library, a standing monument, a unique treasure house, a world intellectual centre was formed as a **Palace Library** during the Nayak rule of Tanjore. Successive Maratha Kings looked after and

enriched the Library. Serfoji Maharaja II (1798 to 1832 A.D.) was chiefly responsible for shaping the library to the present nature and made it his life work to preserve develop and to hand it down to posterity, the heritage. It is said that he would not hesitate to purchase books and manuscripts from his personal belongings with his good zeal as a bibiliophile and bibiliolater. He purchased many rare manuscripts and printed books in many languages and enshrined them in the archive of this internationally reputed Library.

The Tanjore Maharaja Serfoji's Sarasvati Mahal Library is one of the most famous Manuscript Libraries that exists in the world. It is the intellectual centre for research scholars coming not only from India but also from abroad. There are many rare and unique manuscripts in this Library and so many scholars from many parts of India and abroad are visiting to gather valuable information about various branches of language and literature. Dr. A.C. Burnell, District Session Judge, a learned scholar, devoted a great deal of research in cataloguing the manuscripts in the Library. Dr. Buhler appreciates this Library by saying that it contains a great many useful and a number of unique and rare books and manuscripts. The **Encyclopaedia Britannica** defines the library as follows : **"Perhaps the most remarkable library is that of the Raja of Thanjavur which dated from the end of the 16th century"**. Research Scholars and visitors from all over the world are visiting the Library to refer the rare manuscripts that are preserved in its archives.

The Sarasvati Mahal has become more a research Library than a mere reading centre. So it has become a

necessary function of the Administrative machinery of the Library to preserve, edit and publish the rare and useful manuscripts for the good of the general readers and research scholars. In 1918 under a Trust deed, the library was established as a Trust with an endowment of Rupees One Lakh. As per trust deed the Library was administered by an **Administrative Committee** consisting of five members with funds derived from the endowment and recurring grants given by the Tamil Nadu Government and adhoc grants by the Government of India.

The Government of Tamil Nadu after taking into consideration of all the relevant factors, in its G.O.Ms.No.290 Education Science and Technology Department (K1) dated 1.2.1983 have directed that the T.M.S.S.M.Library be transferred to a Society consisting of the following dignitories as the Board of Governors and the Society be registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act of 1975 (Act 27 of 1975 in 9.7.1986).

1. **Honourable Minister of Education** **- Chairman**
   Government of Tamil Nadu.

2. **Secretary,**
   Ministry of Human Resource Development
   Department of Culture,
   Government of India. **- Vice-Chairman**

Members

3. Director,
   National Library, Kolkatta

4. Director General.
   National Archives of India,
   New Delhi. -

5. Secretry to Goverment of Tamilnadu
School Education
6. District Collector, Thanjavur.
7. Vise-Chancellor,
Tamil University, Thanjavur.
8. Director,
Department of Archelogy,
Goverment of Tamilnadu, Chennai.
9. Financial Adviser,
Ministry of Culture,
Goverment of India, New Delhi.
10. Joint Secretry,
Financial Department
Goverment of Tamilnadu..
11. Thiru Sivaji Raja T. Bhosale,
Prince, Thanjavur.
12. Thiru. Babaji Raja C. Bhonsale,
Senior Prince, Thanjavur.
13. Educational Adviser to Ministry of Culture,
Government of India, New Delhi.
14. Director,
Sarasvati Mahal Library,
Thanjavur **Member / Secretary.**

Accordingly The T.M.S.S.M.Library Society, Thanjavur was registered in No. 9 / 86 on 9.7.1986.

MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTIONS

The Library has the richest collection of Manuscripts which reflects the culture of South India. It is believed that the collections of the Library should have begun as early as in the middle of the

sixteenth century. The Telugu Nayaks, who ruled Tanjore during 1532 to 1675 A.D. had collected very valuable manuscripts. Most of their collections are being on Palm leaves. These Nayak rulers were not only military chieftains but possessed great artistic and scholarly mind besides a few of themselves authors of no mean repute. Following these Nayak rulers Maratha kings also collected manuscripts and they themselves contributed to the literature and scholars and poets, artists, painters were all enjoyed increasing patronage at the hands of Maratha Kings. In addition the general collections, the Library also came in possession of the private Libraries of several pandits and their patrons, who were living in Tanjore and the neighbourhood. Even now this Library is receiving manuscripts from generous minded people.

The Manuscripts of this library represent:

1. The collection of works on art, science and literature of Tamils from time immemorial.

2. The collection of the works of the Vijayanagara renaissance brought under the Nayak rulers of Tanjore between 1535 to 1673 A.D.

3. The collection of works brought to Tanjore by the Maratha rulers.

4. The collection made by Maharaja Serfoji from all over India.

5. The collection of works, written by scholars in the country of the Nayak and Maratha kings of Tanjore between 1535 to 1855, and

6. The later collection from the families of great scholars.

Since it has rare collection of manuscripts, the Library is considered one among the greatest Oriental Manuscript Library in India. The length and breath of the literature is completely covered in all languages like Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi etc., Research scholars from various Universities come to refer manuscripts for their research.

SANSKRIT MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

A major part of the manuscripts of this library is in Sanskrit language. A total number of 39,000 (approximately) manuscripts out of 49,000 belonging to this language. The Sanskrit manuscripts collection of this library has a unique value in that it preserves the literary works of authors spread over 400 years.

The scripts used in Palm leaves are Grantha, Devanagari, Nandinagari, Telugu and few in Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya etc., The paper manuscripts are in Devanagari script. This collection covers almost all branches of Sanskrit literature viz. Kavya, Nataka, Kosa, Chandas, Alankara, Vyakarana, Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Vedic literature such as Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, Upanishads, Art literature like Natya, Sangita, Kamasastra, Vaidya, Jothisha etc., are available.

Dr. A.C. Burnell prepared a list for the Sanskrit manuscripts of this library and described this collection as, "It may perhaps be asked of the library is worth the labour spent on it. I can answer unhesitatingly that it is, it is now a recognised fact that nearly all Sanskrit works of importance exist in different recensions. The library is unrivalled in this respect. It contains several good manuscripts of all the most important ones known as yet including a few that are now. Sanskrit manuscripts have long been very clear and cost of making paper transcript is now

heavy. As for as I can judge it would not be possible to form a collection like that at Tanjore at a less cost than £ 50,000 but many manuscripts are unquestionably unique.

TAMIL MANUSCRIPTS

The total number of Tamil manuscripts is roughly about 3500 which comprising 7000 titles on Literature and medicine. Mostly they are in palm leaves and they belong to the following categories.

1. Rare commentaries on Sangam works.
2. Unpublished portions of classics.
3. Saiva, Vaishnave and Jain works.
4. Later poetry of all description and
5. Medical works of exceptional value.

The medical manuscripts are very unique and valuable. Many of them are based on the medical records which were practised in Dhanvantri Mahal (A hospital was run by the Raja Serfoji) and written by famous Tamil scholars like Kottaiyur Sivakkolundu Desikar etc., The range of literature is extended to grammar, mathematics, ethics, lyrics, epic, medicine, the philosophical treatise the religious literature on Saivism, Vaishnavism, Jainism, Architecture, Astrology, Mantras etc., These manuscripts were catalogued and published in 18 volumes in descriptive form.

MARATHI MANUSCRIPTS

The Marathi manuscripts of this library consist of the works of South Indian Maharashtrians of seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the hierarchy of the saints Maratha country belonging to the Ramadasi and Dattathreya mutts. The works written by the great saint who adorned the

mutts, the poets and the pandits connected with them have left hundreds of original works and translations.

This library have 3000 (approximately) manuscripts in Marathi language which are mostly in paper and few in palm leaf form. These manuscripts are divided into many sections like Vedanta, Purana, Itihasa, katha and Kavyas, Nataka, Stories, Vaidya, Kamasastra, Sangita etc., They are catalogued into four volumes. Most of the Marathi literature are collected during the regime of Sahaji. Pratapa Simha and Serfoji II. The works of the famous Marathi poets such as Ekanath, Tukaram, Samartha Ramadas, Jayaramakavi, Krishnadasa, Raghunatha Pandita, Thrayambaka makhi, Madhavaswami, Bhimarajagoswamy, Renukadasa, Gangadhara makhi, Rama pandits etc., are available in this library.

TELUGU MANUSCRIPTS

There are 822 bundles of Telugu manuscripts which have 1049 titles, which are mostly in palm leaf and few in paper. These manuscripts of this library are the most valuable collection, particularly relating to the Southern School of Telugu literature. These manuscripts deals with various branches of literature like Padya Kavya. Divipada kavya, Sataka, Dandaka Gana. Yakshagana, Nataka, Vachana, Alankara, Vyakarana, Chanda, Natya, Sangita, Nighantu, Neeti, Vedanta, Vaidya etc., These manuscripts are catalogued in two volumes. During the nayak's regime many Telugu Poets flourished at Tanjore. The rulers like Vijayaraghava Nayak wrote many operas. The works of the famous poets like Virupakshakavi, Bhaskara, Trupurantaka, Talapakakavulu, Thimmana, Vamana are available in this library.

MODI RECORDS (Maratha Raj Records)

This library has **1342** bundles of old records of the Maratha Kings written in **Modi Script**. These records cover over a

century of Tanjore History. Due to paucity of Pandits in Modi the contents could not be brought to light. Mr. R.S. Shelvankar spent two years to study the subject "Tanjore under Maratha" (from 1676 - 1799 A.D.). He took only 27 bundles of Modi records for his study. Mr. R.S. Shelvankar submitted a report and it is available in book form in this library. Tamil University at Thanjavur has published a book title as **"Administration and Social Life under the Maratha rulers of "Thanjavur"** using all the informations, gathered from the Modi records of this library.

All the manuscripts are kept in wooden almirahs. The statement given below shows the details of manuscripts available in the library.

Sl.No.	Languages	Palmleaf	Paper	Total
1.	Sanskrit	18,877	21,068	39,945
2.	Tamil	5,968	----	5,968
3.	Telugu	778	44	822
4.	Marathi	---	3,080	3,080
5.	Hindi	--	22	22
	Total	25,623	24,214	49,837

BOOK COLLECTION

Book collection of this library exceeds 60,000 and it comprises of old books and new books. The old books were mostly collected by Maharaja Serfoji II during his life time. In the collection of Raja Serfoji, there are more than 4500 books in English, French, Italian, Danish languages and Books on musical notation. These books deal with many subjects. The catalogues

reveal the zeal and avidity with which Serfoji II collected books on various subjects i.e. Classics, Journals, periodicals, Lexicons etc., and will win the admiration of book lovers. Some of them are rare in the first and the second editions highly valued by book collectors. In almost all of them we find the autograph of Raja Serfoji in his bold and fluent hand recording the year of acquisition. One is delighted to find the comments of the Rajah in the margin of the pages in some of the books which prove his deep scholarship and erudition and clear understanding of the subject. For instance, a reader will come across several such remarks of the Rajah in fifth volume of the History of the **Decline and fall of the Roman empire** by **Edmond Gibbon** published in the year 1788.

The latter collection consists of more than 55,000 books, which are in Tamil, English, Sanskrit, Telugu, Marathi, Hindi and a few other Indian languages. Every year we are receiving new books as complimentary and old books of some family collections by donations.

DETAILS OF COLLECTION OF BOOKS

1.	TAMIL	15,941
2.	ENGLISH	12,915
3.	SANSKRIT	15,853
4.	TELUGU	2,110
5.	MARATHI	2.602
6.	HINDI	3,977
7.	OTHERS	7,066
		60,464

OTHER COLLECTIONS

Along the manuscripts and books this library has a quite number of Paintings, Drawings, Sketches, Maps and Atlases which are very rare and useful for researchers.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This Library is situated in the centre of Nayak Palace and it was opened for public in 1918. The main function of this library is preservation, publication, cataloguing and service to readers. In 1979 various sections were started on the basis of functions such as Conservation section, Microfilm section, Publication section, Pandits section, Printing Section, Book section, Manuscripts section, and a Museum for visitors. This Library has installed computers in 1998 for the automation of Library activities. As a first phase the Library catalogues are being stored in the Computer for easy information retrieval. It is also proposed to digitize the manuscripts. This Library receives maintenance grant from Government of Tamil Nadu and Developmental grant from Government of India on 100% regular basis.

CONSERVATION

For preservation and restoration of manuscripts, books and other collection, conservation section of this library is adopting modern conservation techniques such as fumigation, lamination, deacidification, repairing, to avoid decay by insects, acidity and other mechanical damages. For preservation of the palmleaf manuscripts, citronella oil is smeared on them to give flexibility to leaves. To keep away the insects, an indigenous preservative consisting of the powder mixture of sweet flag, black cumin, cloves, pepper, bark of cinnamon with camphor is also used. Along with modern insect repellent napthaline balls or Nifol is used.

MICROFILMING UNIT

The library has a fully equipped Microfilming Unit to microfilm all the manuscripts under a time bound programme. More than 20,000 manuscripts have been microfilmed. We are also helping the research scholars by giving them positive Microfilm copy. Xerox copy etc., In 1990 in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi a joint venture of microfilm project has been done and 13062 works were so far recorded in 822 reels.

PUBLICATION

One of the main object of this library is to make the rare and useful manuscripts of the library to see the light. The publication work was started in 1949 with the generous fund from both Government of India and Government of Tamil Nadu. But now the Government of India is financing for publication of books. So far the library has published **496** books in Sanskrit, Tamil, Marathi and Telugu languages, covering the subjects Religion, Philosophy, Literature, Grammar, Dance, Music, Medicine, Astrology, Mantra Sastra, Silpa Sastra etc., with the editorship of eminent scholars as Editors and Guest Editors. A periodical Journal once in four month is also published from 1949. This is intended to light on matters of interest that are too brief for publication as books. To enhance the publication work this library has a Printing press with Tamil, English and Devanagari types and a Binding section for binding the printed books. Also a Computer section consisting 12 systems has been formed to print books in the library itself

The published books are sold through the Sales section. This library gives 10% discount to public for books the value upto Rs.50/-. 20% for Rs.50/- to Rs.200/- and 30% for above

Rs.200/-. For publishers it allows 30% discount. Now a sales cum Books Exhibition is opened.

CATALOGUING

Preparation of cataloguing is a must for easy handling of the manuscripts. The earliest catalogue available in this library was prepared in 1801 by Sadasiva Bhatta alias Gangadara Bhatta by the order of the King Serfoji II, which was only for palm leaf manuscripts and there is a separate catalogue for paper manuscripts of this library, prepared in 1807. Later in 1840 by the order of Serfoji's son Shivaji (1833 - 1855 A.D.) and in 1857 by the order of the then Tanjore District Collector, Forbbes, catalogues were prepared. In 1871 by the order of the British Government, **Dr. A.C. Burnell** catalogued Sanskrit manuscripts which was published in 1880 in Two volumes.

After open to public, Research scholars from home land and foreign countries came in large numbers to collect materials for their research work. To make availability of the information of this library manuscripts, descriptive catalogues were prepared. The preparation of descriptive catalogue for Sanskrit manuscripts were started in 1920 and the work is still going on. The catalogues are not only for Sanskrit manuscripts, but also for Tamil, Telugu and Marathi languages are available. The following table shows the number of descriptive catalogues in different languages.

Sl.No.	Languages	No. of catalogues
1.	Sanskrit	25
2.	Tamil	26
3.	Marathi	6
4.	Telugu	2
5.	English	1

A catalogue for the Raja's collection (English Books) is available for sales and for other books under preparation.

SERVICE TO RESEARCHERS

The library renders the following service to research scholars. Transcribing service. Translation or Transliteration service, Reprography service and consulting service.

MUSEUM

The library has a museum for the common visitors, in which rare exhibits like paintings, rare manuscripts in palm leaf and paper form, illustrated manuscripts paintings on paper, interested drawings, rare printed books, portraits and arms of the Thanjavur Kings etc., This is opened all days except few **National holidays.**

PAINTINGS

Tanjore school of paintings gets an important place for the technique. Mostly this style of paintings are on wood and glass base, rarely in paper as an illustrated Manuscripts form. Tanjore school of paintings was originated in the Nayak rule and developed by the Maratha Kings. This library has nearly 30 paintings of pictures of Gods, Portraits of Maratha kings and Royal personalities. Description of some paintings is given below:

1. Sarasvati
2. Adi Sankara
3. Samartha Ramadass
4. Krishna and Yasoda
5. Serfoji II

GODDESS SARASVATI

A painting of Sarasvati, the Goddess of learning, displayed in the library is a typical Tanjore style painting, believed to belong to the 18th century. The Goddess is seated on a throne backed with a cotton cylindrical bolster. She is holding the Veena in the recital style. In her right hand, she holds the Rosary and a bundle of manuscripts in her left hand. The smiling face is so graceful that every visitor to the library admires it. Sarasvati the Goddess of speech is regarded as the Sakti or consort of Brahma.

ADI SANKARA

Adi Sankara, with his "Chin Mudra" seated on the lotus flower is teaching the path of enlightenment to his four disciples. They were later consecrated as the "Heads of the Mutts" which were established by the Sankara in the four directions viz., Dwaraka, Poori, Sringeri and Badrinath.

SAMARTHA RAMADASS

This is also a Tanjore style of painting depicting Samartha Ramadass. He was the Guru of the great Shivaji of Maharashtra and his descendants. So it is proper to see his picture in the library. He is the author of Dasabodham which is also placed in the show case. He is holding a tiger-hide in his left hand and the rosary in his right hand facing the ground. The depiction of his physique is admirable with black beard and a Caubhina in the waist.

BALAKRISHNA AND YASODHA

This is one of the biggest wooden paintings of this library. It depicts the mythological scenes of the punishment to Krishna by his mother Yasodha and relief the curse of Two Saints, who were in tree forms.

SERFOJI MAHARAJA II (1798 - 1832 A.D.)

Rajah Serfoji II was the son of Tulajaji II. He was mainly responsible for the development of the Sarasvati Mahal Library at Tanjore and collected many works from Banares. He patronised many scholars. Serfoji was a titular King (i.e.) without any onerous duties of a ruler. So Serfoji devoted his whole time to the pursuit of culture and made his court the home of learning. He cherished a taste for western learning through his association with **Schwartz** the missionary for whom he had erected a splendid monument in marble in the Chapel of Tanjore. He spoke and wrote English well and enlarged his big Library at Tanjore by adding printed books and manuscripts in many languages to his priceless collections. The books collected by him represent all fields of literature, Vedanta, Grammar, Kavya, Music, Dance, Architecture, Medicine and Astronomy etc.,

The tower **Manora** with eight storeys at Saluvanayakkan Pattinam is a beautiful memorial of Serfoji the lover of art. He erected it in honour of the English victory over Napoleon. A handsome and well built figure with cultivated taste Serfoji was a popular prince. He was a great traveller and he saw nothing which he did not use to advantage when he returned home.

Bishop Heber who saw him in Tanjore in 1826 and spent some time with him in Sarasvati Mahal has left a glowing account of the Scholar King. "I have seen many crowned heads" he recorded "but no one whose deportment was more princely." Not merely his deportment but also his high intellectual attainment and encyclopaedic knowledge greatly impressed those who saw him when he sees the results of this library. This painting is in canvas cloth and must be drawn in his life time.

PALM LEAF MANUSCRIPTS

Most of the early manuscripts are in palmleaf form. The method of writing i.e. incising with metal pen (stylus) and Blackening with vegetable juice and lamp black was followed. Some palm leaf manuscripts like oldest, largest, smallest, illustrated and other interested manuscripts are exhibited for vision description of them is given below.

PHALAVATI

This is one of the oldest palm leaf manuscripts available in this library. It comes under the group of unique and single manuscripts series of this library. It is a glossary on the Purva Mimamsa Sutras of Jaimini. Mimamsa means, a reverent study leading to a scientific quest for truth and it was this search after truth leading to the solution of the great problem of life that engaged the attention of the ancient in the past. The word Mimamsa means profound thought of reflection. The word is derived from the root word which means to think, know and understand. The sage Jaimini systematised the principles of Purva Mimamsa and gave them a definite shape in the form of the extent sutras distributed over 12 chapters. The mimamsa occupies the most important place not only among six systems of Indian philosophy (Sankhya, Nyaya, Vạiseshika, Mimamsa, Yoga and Vedanta) but among all the ancient and sacred literature. This work is published by our library. The editor of this work is Navalpakkam Sri N.S. Devanathachariar.

THIRUVAIMOZHI VACAKAMALAI

It is a palm leaf manuscript written in manipravala style with the commentary by Koneri Dasyai, the servant of Koneri.

It is a rare commentary on Tiruvoimozhi of Nammalvaar. The picture of Lord Renganatha reclining on a serpent couch and Lakshmi seated by his side have been drawn on it with the stylus itself. There is no other manuscripts of the work available except the one in Sarasvati Mahal Library. The library had the honour of publishing this work. The editor of the work is Navalpakkam Sri N.S. Devanathachariar.

VALMIKI RAMAYANAM

A bundle of palm leaf manuscripts in grantha script kept in the show case contain **24** thousand slokas of **Valmiki Ramayana**. It is a unique feature to the skill of the ancient scribers. Each palm leaf measures 3" x 9". Both sides of all these leaves bear **thirty lines** with miniature grantha letters, impossible to read with naked eyes.

KAMBA RAMAYANAM

Tamil literature would incomplete without Kamba Ramayanam. It is a classic and often celebrated poem. Though Kambar borrowed the plot for the epic from Valmiki, he excelled the original. This is one of the biggest palm leaf manuscripts bundles in this library society (size 19" x 11" x 1½") written in Tamil by **Vasudeva Pillai** (A.D.1719). It contains of seven kandas in **537** leaves.

PANCHAPAKSHI SASTRAM

This is one of the smallest palm leaf manuscripts available in this Library. It is a pocket size edition of a palm leaf work dealing with Astrological facts predictable through five birds. Now a days astrology is considered to be a Vedic Science. It is not a superstition.

BURMESE SCRIPT

A palm leaf manuscript of Sanskrit language in Burmese script dealing with Buddhistic philosophy.

Along with the above manuscripts, Sanskrit manuscripts in Oriya script. Mantra Sastra manuscripts with diagram and scrolled manuscripts are exhibited.

PAPER MANUSCRIPTS

In the Museum Exhibition some rare interesting and illustrated paper manuscripts are available. The manuscripts are in handmade paper of indigenous and imported. These manuscripts may be classified as rare manuscripts, manuscripts with title sheet illustration and illustrated manuscripts.

RARE MANUSCRIPTS

BHAMATI

This is a paper manuscript of 1468 A.D. written in Banares. It is a commentary on Sri Sankara's Bhasyam of the Advaitic school of Philosophy. The paper is very soft and thin. Bamathi is the name given to work of Vachaspati Misra by him to celebrate the service rendered by his wife when he was writing the commentary. He was completely engaged in writing this work after his marriage and when he completed this work he noticed that the old lady standing by him was his wife. She was weeping for want of children, because in her old age child bearing was no longer possible. Understanding her feeling and her greatness he gave her name to his work and told her that those who ever read this work were their children.

BHAGAVAD GITA

This is one of the smallest pocket size manuscript available in Sanskrit language written in devanagari script. The Bhagavad Gita is the most popular Hindu scripture. It is regarded as one of the three scriptures, the other two being the Upanishads and Brahmasutras. It may be stated without any hesitation that there is no other Hindu scripture which has been so frequently commented upon. **Durga saptasati** is another paper manuscript in small size is also exhibited.

PURUSHA SUKTAM

This paper manuscript consists of four sheets of white letters on black background. Instead of using Black ink for letters, it was on background and left the white space for letters like stencilling.

TATTVA CHINTAMANI

This is a Sanskrit work in Benagali script, written on a special kind of paper. It gives the appearance of a palm leaf.

AMBAR HUSSAINI

A commentary for the Hindu Holy Book Bhagavad Gita has been written in Marathi Language by a Muslim poet name Amber Hussain.

RIGVEDA MANUSCRIPTS WITH ILLUSTRATED TITLE SHEET

The Vedas are timeless because they are believed by us to have issued like breath from the self-existent Brahman. They have existed from all eternity in the form of "Sabda" (eternal articulate sound) and have come down to use through the ear

(sruti) by constant oral recitation through a succession of Vedic teachers for several thousands of years. The word "Brahman" is "akshara" i.e. imperishable, indestructible, undecaying and therefore the Vedas are "Akshara Brahman". The word Veda means Sacred knowledge. The term is applied to the divine unwritten knowledge, which was communicated to Rishis. The Rig-veda Samhita we have today belongs to the Sakala Sukha School. It consists mostly of prayers to the Vedic deities. There are some symbolic as well as dramatic and artistic dialogues. We regard the Vedic deity as our father, brother, son, friend, benefactor, guardian and all in one. It is the Lord poetry (devasya karyam) which never perishes. It is a treasure of lofty ideas and a brilliant gem in the galaxy of the world's greatest books.

Illustrations of these Manuscripts are depicted in fast colouring in each of the title sheets of Rig-Veda Samhita in Sanskrit. A number of picture is available in this section describing more than 20 purana stories. The miniature painting on the cover pages are exquisite in the ornamental border and designs. The time of the manuscripts may be 21th century. The last page of each bundle has beautiful flower designs.

MAHABHARATA MANUSCRIPTS

The Mahabharata is not a mere epic. It is a romance telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself containing a code of life; a philosophy of social and ethical relations and speculative thought on human problems that are hard to rival.

It is a moving history of our land. From time immemorial great minds have been formed and nourished and touched by the heroic deeds described in the Ramayana and Mahabharata.

In most Indian homes children formerly learned these immortal stories, as they learnt their mother tongue at the mother's laps. The sweetness and sorrows of Sita and Draupati, the heroic fortitude of Rama and Arjuna and the loving fidelity of Lakshmana and Hanuman become the stuff of their very philosophy of life. The growing complexity of life has changed the simple pattern of early home life. Even so, there are few in our land who do not know the Ramayana and Mahabharata, although the stories now come embroidered with the garish fancies of the Kalakshepam and Cinema, retaining but little of the dignity and approach to truth of Vyasa or Valmiki. Mahabharata is only of the noblest heritage, and it is our cherished belief that to hear it faithfully told is to love it and come under its elevating influence, which strengthens the soul and drives home as nothing else does the varieties of ambition and evil, and the futility of hatred Mahabharata has moulded the character and civilisation of one of the most populous of the world's nation. Indeed Mahabharata has another name known among scholars. "Jaya" which means victory, conveying the moral herein indicated. (Jaya is the name by which the work is referred to in the first invocatory verse of the epic).

There are also paintings on wooden covers in which the manuscripts are bound together, some of which are very rich and handsome. The centre is occupied by a broad arcade panel in which Vishnu is riding on Garuda. On either side are Tumburu and Narada, the divine ministers who eternally sing the praise of the Lord in Vaikuntha. The background is red and rather spacious with flowers shown on the ground. Vishnu is blue, all the details are in fine workmanship, finished with gold and with patterns of dots or lines. The wooden covers generally surpass the paper

illustrations in composition, colour and workmanship, eventhough the subject of iconic. This library has a very large number of illustrated texts of which only a few examples have been described.

GREAT SHIVAJI AND RAMADASS

Another illustration shows a royal personage and his preceptor in small illuminations on either side of a horizontal page. On the title page of the Atmarama Grantha of A.D.1820, the two portraits are of Sivaji on the life and Ramadass his Guru on the right. About Ramadass, has been discussed earlier in this article. The title occupies a third central panel. Each panel has narrow borders. Each illumination is only 6 x 7 cm. in size with a band of shading at the edge of the picture. The background are pale blue and there is shading in the edge of the pictures. The figures though formally passed have a portrait quality and represent the historical persons. Sivaji sits with hands folded obeisance his sword on the ground. The Saint Ramadass is seated, and his hands are in the teaching posture behind him in a bolster and he wears a tiger fleece hide over his shoulders. (The Guru is generally shown nude except for a small lion cloth. He has a neat beard and is stout; the tiger hide always accompanies him and may be taken as his attribute). The title of the text in Marathi is in red lettering. Around the page and running close to its edge is a floral border; in spited of the golden decoration, the page is formal and even austere. The broad and narrow borders divide the space and tightly frame the pictures.

DASABODAM

A philosophical work by Samartha Ramadass Swami. Guru of Sivaji, the great Maratha ruler written in OVI metre in

Marathi. This was translated into Tamil and delivered as a lecture by Madhoba Ratnakarar head of a mutt. Gopaladasam copied these Tamil lectures during the narration, as revealed in the colophon of the manuscript. Samaratha is of opinion that only those who conduct the house hold life successfully are competent to be a Mumukshu (seekers of divine knowledge). This has been published by our library as edited by Thiru S. Ganapathi Rao in two parts.

SIVA PARA PANCARATNA SLOKA

This is a wonder in macroscopical writing. Five slokas were written by Kavi Gurudass in praise of Lord Pancanatheeswara at Thirvaiyaru. To the naked eye it is only a sloka in Devanagari script. But when we look deep into it with the help of a lens of Microscope we see an amazing thing. The letters of the slokas are not made out of line sketches, as we do usually, but are miraculously modelled out of the word **'Siva'** repeated hundreds by **'Siva'** . Does this not reflect the Hindus strong religious conviction that Lord Siva is omnipresent and there is nothing in the world without the divine being in it.

ILLUSTRATED MANUSCRIPTS

CITRA RAMAYANA

Another technique of story telling is successfully achieved here.

High quality miniature paintings of Maratha period (A.D. 1676 - 1855) on paper are preserved here depicting the first three kandas of Ramayana namely Bala, Ayodhya and Aranya. For every picture an explanation is given in Telugu. It is said that the South Indian style is adopted for the miniature picture kind. This is very rare for South India and for Hindu religion. Only Mogul style of painting has the miniature pictures.

THE LIFE OF GHAZNI MOHAMED

This book is a Demy octatvo size illustrating the glittering style of the Moghul paintings. It is the pictorial representation of the life of Mohamed of Ghazini. Heading for each page is written in Persian.

PRABODHA CHANDRODAYAM

This paper manuscript contains painted pictures of the characters of the Sanskrit allegorical drama Prabodha chandrodaya.This Library had the honour of publishing this rare work.The editor of this work was Thiru. **V. Venugopalan.**

GAJA SASTRAM

This is an album of illustrations and coloured pictures of many varied elephants painted in lively colours. It was painted during the Maratha period i.e. during the reign of King Serfoji II. A treatise on elephants by Palakappiya Muni with extracts from other works. This work gives descriptions in Sanskrit and Marathi for each page.

By the grace of Brahma, palakappiya had become well versed in medical science even at his birth. He lived among elephants for a considerable number of years and became well acquainted with their habits. As a result he became the author of this work and was able to do it well.

The Library has published this work with a few colour illustrations. The beautiful pictures with this work contains are things of beauty and joy forever. In this work winged elephants are also portrayed.

ASVA SASTRAM

A detailed colour album containing pictures of horse. This is a treatise by Nakula on Science of horses as expounded by Salihotra. Susruta, Garga, Surya and other classical authors. The treatise on horse is the quintessence of the works of these great authorities.

This rare illustrated manuscripts is available in this Library. The pictures of animals and the shades of colour used in painting them in this work are its noteworthy features. Horses are useful mainly in warfare physically and psychologically they are uniquely fitted for this purpose. They are fearless, sure of their steps anywhere, sensitive to the wishes and predicament of the rider, and quick in perception of the surroundings. Horses are masters of all seasons and can go without food for days and months, so the rider should also be prepared to stand hunger and vicissitudes of all seasons.

PAINTINGS ON PAPER

This library has few painted bound books, showing ancient technique and colour. Few examples are Books on birds. Palanquins, Military costumes, Views of Banares Ghats, Botanical pictures, Musical amusements etc

BOOKS ON BIRDS - FALCON

This book contains many pictures of birds painted in true colours. One of the birds is the Falcon of Rajah Serfoji II. It was presented by the Nawab of Udayagiri for the King to Bhujanga Rao and Hari Rao when they were sent to Hydrabad. Rajah Serfoji II had a real judge of a horse, a cool head, and a

deadly shot of the tiger. Serfoji had the Urdu book on Falconry. "Bajinamah" which deals with the treatment of disease of birds, translated into Marathi.

PALANQUIN

This book consists the view of fine Royal Palanquins with full decoration. A real wooden palanquin used by H.H.M. Umabai Saheb is exhibited in the Museum.

MILITARY COSTUMES

The King Serfoji's military costumes are drawn in 17 pictures. These paintings illustrate the rank of the military servants and the colour of the dress offered to them in those days.

THE 64 BATHING GHATS ON THE GANGES AT BANARES

The 64 bathing ghats on the Ganges at Banares were painted during Rajah Serfoji's pilgrimage to Banares. The view shows the ghats as viewed when one travels in the boat on Ganges. The other ghats are shown on the successive leaves. When all leaves are put in a line one will get a complete view of the Bank of Ganges. The length of the picture goes to roughly 40 feet. Such a long painting is very rare in India.

MYTHOLOGICAL PAINTINGS

This Library has three books of Mythological paintings which deal about the stories of the epic Mahabharata. The paintings are a rough one and ordinary colours were used. The pictures, arms, warfare, costumes, animals, musical instruments etc., can be seen in these books.

FASCINATING PICTURES

DANIEL PAINTINGS

Rajah Serfoji II (1798 - 1832) was a connoisseur of paintings. A collection of pictures of antiquity (numbering 80 plates) is preserved here. They bring back the scenes of ancient cities of India and London, the Rock-fort of Trichirapalli, the palace of Madura, Jimma mosque at Delhi etc. These picture make it possible to travel into the past as soon as we step into the library. They were drawn by famous Daniel Brothers William Daniel and Thomas Daniel in 1790. The Himalayan views were drawn by **J.B. Fraser.** These engravings were in a book form. For public vision, selected pictures are exhibited in this Museum.

CHARLES LE BRUN'S HUMAN PHYSIOGNOMY CHARTS

It is a collection of interesting Lithographic pictures drawn by Charles Le Brun, who was a physiognomist and the Court Artist at the time of the French King Louis XIV. A comparative study of human faces with those of relevant birds and beasts are wonderfully dealt with.

The similarity of the eyes of human being to those of birds and animals , the posture of nose, the shape of chin and forehead. is clearly drawn and shown in each picture. These picture captivate the attention of the visitors of the Library and are worth viewing in two aspects scientific and artistic.

CHINESE PUNISHMENT

This is an interesting book illustrated by twenty one engravings with foot notes both in English and French painted

in 1804 in London. The punishments are gruesome and vigorous. Ingenious methods appear to have been devised to torture the victims who had committed various offences according to the prevailing law of the land.

MEDICAL

The Rajah Serfoji has shown interest not only in Art and Literature, but also Medicine. He had a hospital with Indigenous Medicine and Allopathic Medicine. The record shows the names of Foreign doctors worked in his hospital. These activities are recorded for the future use. He had collected more than 500 medical books. Books are in English language printed at London and Edinburgh. Some are exhibited. Description of some books are given below.

DHANVANTRI MAHAL

Rajah Serfoji ran a medical institution called "Dhanvantri Mahal". Besides research on many ailments, excellent work was done on disease like cancer, polio, diabetes and tuberculosis by this institution in Ayurvedic and Siddha field. Besides patronising scholars by gift of house and lands and acquiring manuscripts and books with money, precious gems and jewellery, the Rajah indefatigably devoted himself to the progress of research in Dhanvantri Mahal by bringing together Siddha. Ayurveda and Unani physicians of repute. As a result of their discussion, the best among tried and effective remedies are embodied in the series of works named Sarabhendra Vaidhya Muraigal. These works are composed in easy Tamil verse form to facilitate easy memorization. Many of them have been published by this library. The Dhanvantri Mahal also had a wing of research for animal

husbandry. Many prescriptions for the diseases of domestic as well as wild animals and birds show the broad scope of interests supported by the Rajah and implemented by the Dhanvantri Mahal. The concept of research especially of a clinical nature is comparatively modern. Some modern systems carry out research only on rabbits and other animals. But at a comparatively early period. Rajah Serfoji's doctors were confident enough to use their drugs on human beings.

SERFOJI'S MEDICAL TABLET

(prepared during 19th century)

These tablets, namely Kangasundaram, Cintamani, Rasbhupati and Panchamirta parpodi, were prepared according to recipes developed in 1812 A.D. in the medical Unit run by King Serfoji II. The name of each tabletsis embossed on one side and the year of preparation on the otherside. These tablets possess a special quality. They are immune to time, neither decomposing nor losing their therapeutics property. A very powerful preservative by name of "Kattu" is used to enhance their preservative value. They are as useful and powerful even now as they were at the time of their preparation.

EYE HOSPITAL

This throws light on the medical service rendered by the Government in the beginning of the 19th century. An album of ophthalmic case-sheets maintained in the Vaidyasalas conducted by the King Serfoji II is a very good record of diseases and their remedies. In place of X-ray of modern times, pictures of the eye with its many defects are painted in their true colours. The name of the patient with her or his age, date of admission, details of prescription and date of discharge with signature of the medical

officer are clearly entered in the case sheets. The case system is a forerunner to the case-sheet system practised in our times.

BOTANICAL ALBUM

A hand painted herbarium of medical plants in natural colours was prepared in those days for the purpose of identification and use in the Dhanvantri Mahal. There are still three volumes containing 92 pictures. The pictures are crisp in colour even today after a lapse of more than a century.

OTHER IMPORTANT EXHIBITS

COPPER PLATES

Five copper plates are placed in the showcase for public vision. Four plates are in Marathi language and Modi script and one is in Tamil. They are very brief and mostly related to Government orders. A short of indecipherable shorthand is used in some contexts in these plates. They are the exact copies of the original Government orders communicated to subordinate officers at the headquarters of different Mahals. As they are copies, the space for the Government seal is blank. The officers are instructed in all cases to return the originals to concerned part (donor in this case) after making copies for their own use and for onward transmission to the Government. The designators of one or two attesting officers are given at the bottom of each record. The first copper plate is a report of his surprise inspection at Kumbhakonam by the personal writer of the palace submitted to the King. The other one is a copy of the order to the same saint sanctioning a grant of 7 Panam daily – 4 Panam for the Chatram and 3 for the Trichirapalli Chatram for the palace. The another plate is the King's order addressed to the officer of Tiruvarur directing them to pay 1 Panam daily to Piramananta

Pairaki and Kicaners pairaki. The next one dated 3rd June, 1741 addressed to the officers of the Mannargudi Mahal asking them to pay daily 10 Panam from the palace charity of Piramanantha Pairaki to enable him to feed sickly persons. And thd last one dated 1744 is a similar order by the king to the officers of Cunkamkottai Mahal of the Thanjavur directing them to pay the same person 5 Panam daily out of the palace charity. These copper plates were composed at the time of Pratapa Simha and Ekoji II. For further details, one may refer the book published by the university, Thanjavur ***"Thanjai Marathiyar Ceppedukal 50"***.

BOOKS PRINTED WITH STONE CUT TYPES

The art of printing was unknown to the Tamilians. The first press with Devanagari type in Southern India was started about 1805, at Tanjore by Rajah Serfoji II, the pupil of great German missionary Schwartz. His main object at that time was to print books required for the elementary Sanskrit and Maratha schools he had established in Tanjore District. A small hand press and fonts of Devanagari types were procured probably from Madras. The little office received the rather magniloquent name of ***"Navavidya Kalanidhi"***. The Superintendent of the press is said to have been Mr. ***Kuppa Bhatta.*** The first production of the press seems to have been a Sanskrit, Marathi Panchanga (Almanac) which was continued for several years until superseded by those of the Bombay Lithographic presses. The book Rughuvamsa with 19 sargas of text complete was printed by the press in 1808. This is the earlist edition of this poem. The work Maghamula (original text only), Kumarasambhavam and Annabhattiyam were also printed in Devanagari letters by the press. This bears testimony to the craftsmanship and skill of the ancient people of Tanjore.

BHAGAVAN VEDA

The Bhagavan Veda is a single volume of all the four Vedas brought out by Swami Gangeswarananda and distributed by him to select centers in India and abroad. This book has been recently donated to the Library.

SERFOJI RAJAH II – PAINTING ON CANVASS

This painting on canvas of size 10ft. x 10ft. with good teakwood frame. The Portrait of Rajah Serfoji II of horse gives a magnificent look. This Painting is said to be the biggest on canvas of the maratha period. The painting was repaired in 1907 under the orders of J. P. Bed Ford Esq., the then Collector of Thanjavur District and again it was retouched on 1947. The painting was brought from the Government High School in Mukutahmba Chattiram, Orathanadu on the instructions of Thiru T. Shanmuga Rajeswaran, I. A. S., the then District Collector of Thanjavur to this Library. The painting was restored by this library Conservation staff with the help of experts from the Regional Conservation Laboratory in Mysore and it is displayed in the Library Museum for public.



THANJAVUR

A HISTORICAL STUDY

Thanjavur the Royal City of the Great Cholas, the Nayakas and Marathas which is one of the big towns in the state of Tamil Nadu and is situated on the main route of the Southern Railways, 351 k. m. South of Chenni. It considered to be one of the oldest towns in the country having more than 200 years of its historical background. It is situated amidst the vast deltaic tract of the Cauvery known as the granary of South India. As the capital of the successive Ancient Hindu Dynasties and in all ages one of the Chief Political, Literary and Religious Centre of South India this town is full of interesting associations.

According to a legend Tanjore derived its name from a Giant or Rakshasan **Thanjan** who once made his home here. He was killed by Anandavalli Amman and Sri Neelamega Perumal. Thanjan's request at the time of death that the city might be named after him, was granted. Thanjavur or Tanjore really means a **Place of Refuge** in which it takes its title form the work "Thanjan" signifying "refuge". The city also goes by the name "Azhahi" as the tradition says that Kubera stayed and worshipped here. In point of view of antiquity Greece is the only European country that can be compared with Thanjavur. Just as Egypt is called the "Gift of the Nile" so also Cholas Culture and Art may be called the gift of the Cauvery river a glorious heritage which we should feel proud of.

KARIKAL CHOLAN

The first Chola king recording in history is **Karikal Chaolan** who ruled Chola country in later half of the first century A. D. He was a statesman, a warrior and an engineer. It is that the Great Dam at Kallani, across the river Cauvery was built by Karikalan. He built Kaverippoompattinam, the present Poompuhar the then fort of the later Cholas with their Capital at Wuraiyur. The literary work "Pattinapalai" of Kadiyalur Uruthiran kannanar and "Chilapadikaram" of Elangovadigal the Tamil literary masterpieces give a vivid description of the famous King Karaikala, the greatest among the Cholas of Sangam Age was the son of Ilanchetchenni distinguished for the beauty of numerous war chariots. He crushed the combined forces of the Pandyas and the Chera King's in the battle of Kovilvenni which lies fifteen miles east of Thanjavur.

VIJAYALAYA CHOLAN (A. D. 850 - 871)

The Chola revival occurred in the days of VIJAYALAYA who held the title Parakesari. He perhaps ruled from Palaiyari or in the neighborhood of Wuraiyur and wrested Thanjavur at an opportune moment from the Mutharayas who held that town. He built a temple there for Nisumbasudani. We hear VIJAYALAYA Chaturvedimangalam and Vijayalacholeeswaram. He was reputed as a captor of Thanjai (i. e. Thanjavur) even in his life time and we read them all in his inscriptions.

ADITYA CHOLAN (A. D. 871 - 907)

He was the son of Vijayalaya, the first of the Imperial line of Cholas. He distinguised himself in the battle at Sripurambiam near Kumbakonam in which the Pandyas got a signal defeat from which he did not recover for a long time. Aditya, it may be

supposed, continued the family tradition of patronage of Saivism. He died at Tondamandalam (near Kalahasti). His son Parantaka erected a temple over his remains and set up a Linga on it; he called the temple Kodandarameswaram. It is some what unusual for the Hindus to raise temples over mortal remains; possibly this practice was inspired by Buddhist example. It is not known if this was an isolated instance or it was common practice in the country in those times. He ruled till 907.

PARATNAKA CHOLAN (A. D. 907 – 955)

He was also called as Maduraikonda Parakesari who was the greatest conqueror among the early Cholas. He was the abode of Goddess of Valour (Vira Sri). He defeated the Pandya King and burnt his Capital Madurai by which achievement he received the title "Madurantaka". He was as bright as Arjuna in the battle of hither to unconquered King Krishnaraja II and thereby augmented his own glory, in recognition he was entitled "Vira Chola!". He was a staunch devotee of Nataraja of Chidambaram. The Thiruvalangadu Copper Plate describes him as a bee at the lotus feet of Parantaka (Siva) and add that he built for Purari the Lord of the Silver Mountain (of Kailasa) a Golden House called the Debhra Sabha. Thus Chidambaram became the Hema Sabha. Hiranyasabha, Kanakasabha or Ponnambalam and he acquired the title of Ponveinda Perumal one who covered roof with gold. From that time on Nataraja (or Adavallan) to give him his picturesque Tamil name become the Kulanayakam (family deity) of the Cholas. During his period arts of peace received much attention as deeds of war; in particular the old brick temples were rebuilt of stone and enriched and new one to stone came to be constructed. The Uttatamerur inscriptions testify to this King's interest in the autonomous village administration.

RAJARAJA THE GREAT (A. D. 985 – 1014)

He was a Great soldier and General like Alexander, Julius Caesar and Hunnibal. With the accession of Rajaraja, we enter upon a century of Grandeur and Glory of the Dynasty of the Cholas. On the death of Uttama in 985 A. D. Arunmolzhi, the second son of Sundara Chola Paranthaka ascended to the throne with the royal title Rajaraja. He was a Rajkesari as his predecessor Uttama being a Parakesari. He was Sundara Chola's son by the Kerala Princess Vanavan Madevi. He ruled from 985-1014 A. D. He came to the throne on some day between 25th June and 25th July, 985 A. D. His star was Sadayam.

Rajaraja has been considered to be the Greatest Chola rulers i. e., what Karikalan was to the Sangam Cholas he is considered to be of the Imperial Cholas. His greatness could not have attained fruition but for his son Rajaraja's imperialism will not be assessed truly if Rajendra had not built on it. The debate about the relative greatness of father and son is futile since the achievements are complimentary and Rajaraja's efforts were consolidated and improved by his son's genius and Rajendra's achievements depended largely on the nucleus created by Rajaraja. By his victories he came to rule over the whole modern presidency of Madras, parts of Mysore and the Island of Ceylon. During his time not only art and literature but also trade and commerce were flourished. He sent many naval expeditions, conquered many islands and formed the Federation of Malaya States, Indo-China and Burma.

He was a great King. All the traits are mingled in him, piety, courage, liberality, purity, tranquility, courtesy, wisdom, intelligence, mercy, forbearance, firmness of purpose, perseverance and devotion to the welfare of all that nature might stand up and say "Here was not only a man, but a supreme leader of man".

Rajaraja the great had many titles. The noble King had great-taste for music and what is more he sought to make those names in current coins by attaching them to new foundations of substituting them for old ones. Besides Rajaraja, Mummudi Chola, Jayankondan and Arunmozhi which became part of the cities, Valanadus and Mandalams, the King also called himself Cholendra Simha, Sivapadasekara, Jaganada, Nigarila Chola, Chola Martanda, Rajkesari, Rajamartanda, Nityavidnoda, Pandya Kulasani, Keralandaga, Singalentaka and so on. He had many officers who did singnal service to Kingdom. Senathipathi Krishnanraman also called Rajendra Chola Brahmarayan for building the enclosure and the Mandapa of the Thanjavur Temple. Senadhipathi Kuravan Loganathan was a Revenue Officer who carried out the revenue survey. It began in A. D. 1001 and it was a very important administrative activity of Rajaraja's reign.

BIG TEMPLE

Rajaraja had many peace time achievements to his cridit also. He built the Rajarajeswaram, the Great Temple at Thanjavur. It is according to the experts on architecture the most beautiful monument of Hindu Architecture is the tower nearly 200 ft. high. The temple was completed on the 27th day of 25th year of his reign. It was not slave labour that created this monument Karurthever a sacred hymnist praised this new temple.

The great Temple is the grandest of Chola monuments named Sri Rajarajeswaram after its builder Rajaraja. The Pagoda is by for the grandest in India. No traveler to the East especially to South India has missed a visit to this great edifice or failed to be impressed by the majesty and beauty of Sri Brahadeeswara. Rajaraja Chola's greatest achievement is the famous Big Temple which stands to day, a colossal monument of his daring conception in archtecture.

RAJENDRA CHOLAN (A. D. 1012 – 1044)

Rajendra was so far as we know the only son of his father and since his father was a Rajakesari, he was a Parakesari, He was associated with his father in the administration of the ever extending Kingdom from 1012 (somewhere between march 27th and July 7th) i. e., for two or three years; Rajaraja I and Rajendra I jointly ruled the Cholo Kingdom. Rajendra improved his inheritance by waging extensive and fierce wars all along the borders of his Kingdom and even beyond the seas to form a Kingdom of immense proportions in the mainland and strengthen further his hold on Ceylon and establish overseas imperial foot holds with the help of an efficient navy. These and his imitation of his father in building a large Siva Temple in the new Capital (he built) constitute his achievements in the foreign and domestic spheres. He loyally and carefully followed in the footsteps of Rajaraja. Rajendra Cholan who ruled A. D. 1012 or 1044 A. D. was also among the Greatest of Cholas. He ruled over a bigger Empire than his father and in his time in those of his sons and grandsons. Thanjavur came to rule over a big overseas Empire. His territory extended up to North India and hence he called himself "Gangaikonda Cholapuram" outside the Eastern borders of the Thanjavur District. To signify his victories in Malaya, then ealled Kadaram, he named several villages as Kadaramkondan in various parts of Tridhirapalli and Thanjavur District. Rajendra bore many titles like Mudikonda Chola, Pandita Chola, Virarajendra, Gangaikonda Chola etc., The temple he built in imitation of the Brahadeeswara of Thanjavur at Gangaikonda Cholapuram is second only in beauty and artistic excellence to that of the original. He Shifted his capital from Thanjavur to Gangaikonda Cholapuram, probably because the new capital was made centrally situated or because it was nearer

to Chidambaram the religious capital of the empire or because he wished to save his Thanjavur based armies from the trouble of crossing the Cauvery and the Kollidam every time they went out to attack the Chalukyas or northern enemies.

RAJENDRA'S SONS (A. D. 1018 – 1070)

He was assisted by his warrior sons, Rajadhirajan, Rajendradevan and Veerarajeneran and others (till 1044) whose reigns witnessed glories naval victories and the consolidation of Chola power in islands like Ceylon, Malaya, Burma and other places. It was almost a joint rule till A. D. 1044.

KULOTHUNGA (A. D. 1070 – 1125)

The last phase of Chola art and architecture begins with the accession of the Kulothunga, a Chalukya Chola price who came to throne at Gangaikonda Cholapuram. He ruled over an extensive empire and established the empire and sent embassies to places like China, Kadaram and Sumatra. It is a strange pattern of destiny that the mighty Chola empire bestrode like a colossus in the Southern peninsula and the lands across the seas. It should have had three successive generations of great kings the last comprising three brilliant brothers although soldiers and able rulers but that two of them should have died without male successors and the third left was short lived one. His son was Vikkirama Cholan and his grandson Kulothungan II ruled till 1150 with conspicuous success. Their descendants held the empire till 1279 when the last Chola King Rajendra III died.

The Cholas were one of the greatest and most gifted dynasties which ruled over India; they held away for a continuous period of about 430 years, in comparison with the Mauryas who ruled for 137 years and the Guptas for 227 years and

Vijayanagara empire which lasted for about 340 years. The kingdom was founded by Vijayalaya in A. D. 850. It came to a close with Rajendra III in A. D. 1279 and Cholas as a political force played a significant role in the Tamil country for four and a quarter centuries. They were famous as conquering heroes as upholders and promoters of Tamil culture especially the Tamil literature. Saivite religion and Temple architecture and as managers of a polity in which the village assemblies were encouraged to play an important role more than these they were the only imperial power in India to found and administer for however short a period in the overseas empire and such an empire was established on the strength of a navy which was an unusual feature of Indian military tradition.

SEVAPPANAYAK (A. D. 1532 – 1560)

Various chieftains calling themselves "Cholas" ruled in the South until about the end of the 14th century, when the Vijayanagar emperors, annexed Cholamandaalm to their kingdom. They ruled Thanjavur through viceroys. One of the viceroys appointed in 1532 by Emperor Achyuta was Sevappa Nayak and he founded the dynasty of Thanjavur Nayak Kings.

Govinda Dikshita played a very important role in the good administration of the country, and it may be said that his fame even eclipsed that of Nayaks. He was the illustrious minister for the three successive Kings Sevappa. Achyuta and Raghunatha. Govinda Dikshit's name and fame is still great in memory of the people of the Choladesa, and the generation that is fast disappearing speaks of his greatness and fame as an administrator as an erudite and fairness which were all brought to bear upon sense of justice and fairness which were all brought to bear upon his high office of minister. The meritorious service with which he enriched the people and the land as well are held in much esteem

at the present day. The rule of a Telugu dynasty over a Tamil kingdom, with such cultural and other benefits to the land is indeed a most striking and creditable feature in the history of South India and forms a most pleasing epoch of vigorous and continuous cultural growth. The Kannada origin of Govinda Dikshita is established by the fact that His Holiness Sankaracharya of Kamakoti Pitha in his Purvasarama belonged to this family and he is of Kannada origin.

Sevappa Nayak, son of Thimmappa Nayak, was a personal attendant of Achutaraya and he waited on the Emperor as betel bearer. He married Murtiamba the sister of the Queen Varadambika wife of Achuta Raya, and the betel bearer who become brother in law of the king and he named his son Achuta to mark his devotion to his master. These indicators of loyalty earned their wages when Sevappa was rewarded with the Nayakship of Thanjavur. When Sevappa Nayak accepted the Government of Thanjavur he was independent of the erstwhile over lordship of Madurai Sevappa started by running over the Chola Mandalem and the Southern parts of Thondaimandalam. He ruled peacefully and his period of reign is not conspicuous for any important events except for the transfer of Trichirappalli to the Nayaks of Madurai in Exchange for Vallam. Sevappa made many charitable endowments, among which a gift of ten velis of land for the upkeep of a choultry attached to the temple in Muvalur in Thanjavur District should be mentioned. He was responsible for the repair works to the Sivaganga Tank in Thanjavur which thereafter was designated **"Seveppaneri"**.

ACHUTAPPA NAYAK (A. D. 1560 – 1600)

Achutappa was a powerful ruler endowed with a keen intellect and faculty for quick decision. If Achutappa was postmaster in the art of warfare and in his use of weapons (Sastra)

his great minister Govinda Dikshita was equally so in his knowledge of the Sastra and when the former won fame by his success in wars, the latter attained renown by his performance of sacrifices. Achutappa the King and Govinda were noted for deeply religious, the Sangita Sudha and Sastras. The Nayak was deeply religious, the Sangita Sudha says the even from his boyhood he was a great devotee of Lord Ranganatha. He had to fight the Muslim and the Portuguese. He interfered in the quarrels between the King of Jaffna and the Portuguese who were ruling over Ceylon and gave shelter in his court to the Jaffna King when he was driven out by the Portuguese.

RAGHUNATHA NAYAK (A. D. 1600 – 1634)

Achyutappa Nayak was succeeded by his son Raghunatha Nayak the most talented and distinguished among Nayak Kings. Like Solomon in wisdom and Absalem in beauty, he is the greatest King that ruled the South. He may be aptly likened to Krishnadevaraya, the well-known Vijayanagar Emperor. He was a great warrior. He distinguished himself as an able general and sagacious ruler. He crushed the Madurai and Gingee rulers in the battle of Toppur. He crossed over to Ceylon and drone the Portuguese out of Jaffna and restored the throne to the refuge King in his court. Under his reign Thanjavur became a great center of learning, art and culture, and the Sanskrit and Telugu and a musician and some of his works are now in the Sarasvati Mahal Library. He served as "Yuvaraja" during the reign of his father Achyutappa Nayak and gained experience both as soldier and as an administrator, directed by his father, he led the forces for the defense of Penukonda, which was then besieged by Deccan forces, and saved the city of Vijayanagar. In return for his signal service Emperor Venkata I complied with his request for the release of Krishnappa Nayak II from prison. His early wars were fought in defence of the Empire. He also led an expedition against

Solaga of the coastal area and against the Portuguese in Jaffna. It is belived that Solaga was the ruler of a territory situated north of the river Kollidam.

The reign of Ragunatha Nayak witnessed an expansion of overseas trade and a keen competition among European merchants for ascendancy in the market. Raghunatha Nayak permitted the Danes to establish a settlement in his country. In 1620 they founded Danesborg, at Tarangambadi. During 1622 they built a fort at this place and intensified and widened the viability of trade. The success gained by the Danes prompted the English to seek a foot hold in the Kingdom.

It appears that the last years of Raghunatha were marked by peace and order in the Kingdom. Men of letters lived in his court and sought royal favours. Yagna Narayana Dikshita in praise of this wrote "Poverty left the country and Thanjavur became the abode of Lakshmi". However this depiction would have represented an attempt to conceal the truth and flatter the rulers, for with an oppressive taxation prevailing in the country, it is difficult to give credence to this statement. The ruler convened "Pandita Parishads" or assemblies of scholars in which learned men and women competed against each other not only to exhibit their intellectual attainments but also in showering encomium upon the King. Incidentally this helped Thanjavur to became a seat of learning. The Southern School of Telugu literature which was noted for its contribution to the Yakshagana type of drama emerged during this period. Sanskrit received encouragement, but Tamil was neglected. As other nayaks did, Ragunatha Nayak too made large gifts to the Brahmins at the expense of the defeated Tamils Govinda Dikshita, who had served his father as a Priest and Minister, continued to hold these posts under him. Both diverted the resources of the kingdom for the promotion of their religion rather than of the welfare of their subjects.

VIJAYARAGHAVA NAYAK (A. D. 1634 – 1675)

Vijayaraghava Nayak the son of illustrious Raghunatha Nayak succeeded his father and ruled Thanjavur from 1634 to 1675. He is the last of the Nayak King of Thanjavur and the Kingdom afterwards passed to Marathas of Thanjavur. During his period Thanjavur was repeatedly attacked by the Madura King of the one side and the Sultan of Bhijapur on the other. From 1653 to 1659 Thanjavur remained in subjection to Bijapur. Vijayaraghava had to free from his palace. But two unexpected forces came to his rescue. First hideous famine broke out in 1659 and forced the Muslim soldiers to run away from Thanjavur. Secondly various army of Kallars, operating form near Vallam, routed the invaders and dislodged them from the fortification in Vallam. But the fate of the Nayaks was sealed when Chockanatha Nayak, King of Madura, attacked Thanjavur by sending his ablest general Venkatakrishnappa Nayak. A Terrible battle ensued, resulting in a decisive victory for Chockanatha. Then Vijayaraghava sought the hedp of Bijapur Sultan. With the help of Bijapur army Vijayaraghava captured Vallam Fort. Lastly the Bijapur army itself turned against him. In that fatal war Vijayaraghava and his family members were killed by Bijapur army. Thus the Nayak Kingdom came to end in 1675 A. D.

The Thanjavur Nayakship was founded when Sevappa Nayak obtained Thanjavur as dowry which his wife brought with her Sevappa's wife Murtiamba was the sister of the queen Varadamba, wife of Achyutaraya, who succeeded Krishnadevaraya on the throne. This is the version of a text called **"Thanjavur Andhra Rajulu Charitram"**. But another source, the Sahityaratnakara, claims that Sevappa acquired Thanjavur by force of arms, from whom it is not specified. It is however true that Achyuta, the Vijayanagara ruler, bestowed Thanjavur

on this Sevappa and converted it into a separated Nayakship thereafter independent of Madurai. Sevappa ruled over the Cholamandalam and part of Thondaimandalam. Sevappa who came to power in 1532, was succeeded by his son Achyutappa Nayak who ruled till 1600. It was during the latter's rule that the "Talikota battle" was fought. The Thanjavur Nayaks had a reputation for being steadily loyal to the Vijayanagara rulers. Even the disastrous defeat experienced by Vijayanagar in 1685 at the hands of the Muslim confederacy at Talikota did not diminish the Thanjavur Nayak's loyalty.

The NayaK rule which came to Thanjavur with Sevappa Nayak in 1532 continued for one hundred and forty three years and yielded place to the Marathas.

EKOJI (A. D. 1676 – 1684)

Venkoji alias Ekoji the son of Shahaji and Tuka Bai ruled Thanjavur from 1675 to 1684. He was an adventurous warrior. Venkoji during his rule began to try continuously to win over the people of his recently acquired Kingdom. He directed his efforts to consolidate his Kingdom and found a Maratha line of his own. His brother, Shivaji the great, was now at the zenith of his power in the north and was keenly ambitious to establish a Maratha hegemony under himself, inclusive of the South. But Venkoji differed from Shivaji's view and he thought it would affect his independence. He established order and peace in the Thanjavur kingdom and made it prosperous by promoting and encouraging agriculture. At the same time he had to fight against hostile powers like Madura and Mysore who wanted to swallow Thanjavur. In spite of all his distractions, he found time to encourage arts and letters. He was sufficiently wise to retire and let his sons rule while he was still alive to guide them. Venkoji died in 1684 and

was succeeded by his first son. A Telugu work entitled **"Karnakalanidhi"** attributed to Sivarama Kavi, a contemporary of Ekoji deals with the king's heroism in saving the fort of Trichy from the forces of Mysore.

SHAHAJI (A. D. 1684 – 1711)

He ruled Thanjavur from 1684 to 1711 A. D. The Sahendra Vilasa Kavya of Ayyarval of Thiruvisainallur says that Venkoji installed Shahaji on the throne even during his own life time. Tryambaka Raya Makhi, the author of Dharmakuta, was his minister. He was a learned, precocious and brilliant King. During his reign in Thanjavur principality took care not to indulge in unmanageable wars, Rajaram, the son of Shivaji the great, was in Gingee and the strong fort was in the hands of Zuffikar Khan, the redoubtable Moghul general. He himself led an expedition to Gingee and helped his Kinsman to drive out the Moghuls, but later he had to pay for this by suffering three attacks on Thanjavur by the Moghul leader, whom he had to bribe with a large tribute.

Sahaji was a great scholar who discovered and encouraged talent. A number of eminent poets and philosophers who wrote in Sanskrit received royal patronage Marathi and Telugu to some extent flourished. Shahaji was a builder and he provided medial and educational facilities to the people. Physicians imported from Hyderabad and Arabia were employed in hospitals he set up. The Maratha Dharbar Hall is said to have been constructed by him. He patronized many men of lettrs. This is well indicated by his gesture of presenting the Shaharajapuram (modern Thiruvisanallur) to a band of learned pandits. He had the title of Abhinava Bhoja which one may take to be an apt one. He himself wrote the following works,

1.	Chandrasekara Vilasa	No. 4359
2.	Shabda ratna Smanvaya	No. 5056 and 5057
3.	Sabda ratna Sangraha	No. 5063 and 5064
4.	Srngara manjari	No. 3965

Ramabhadra makhin, the chief court poet of Shahaji wrote the following works :

1.	Janaki Parinaya	No. 4360
2.	Saddarsini Siddhanta	No. 7631
3.	Patanjali Carita	No. 3826
4.	Unadimanidipika	No. 5675
5.	Sabdabhedanirupana	No. 5301
6.	Srngaratilaka	No. 4613
7.	Paribhasa vrtti vyakhya	No. 5720

SERFOJI - I (A. D. 1711 – 1729)

Serfoji and Tukkoji continued the glorious tradition bequeathed to them by their great brother Shahaji in foreign as well as in domestic politics. Among the officers who served him must be mentioned the reputed general of Army. Dalavay Ananda Rao, the Diwan Raga Pandit, and a minister of sorts by name Ayyavayyan who is much mentioned in inscriptions. This personal abilities cannot be determined on the basis of the usual eulogies in contemporary literature. He was daring worrier and subdued the Chieftain of Ramanathapuram as well as the Nayak of Madura. It was he who greeted the Zamindari of Sivaganga. In 1725 he had to repel the forces of the Nizam with the help of Sahu, the Maratha rular at Satara. Some Sanskrit works are ascribed to his pen. He wrote the work Raghavacharita.

TUKKOJI (A. D. 1729 – 1735)

Venkoji's last son Tukkoji succeeded Serfoji I in 1728 and reigned till 1736. His reign also witnessed the involvement of Thanjavur in the affairs of the Marava country. He was neither competent nor peaceloving. He helped the famous queen Meenakshi of Madura against her opponent Chanda Saheb. But he could not prevent the extinction of the Hindu Kingdom of Madura by the Muslims. It was during his time that the famous Sri Mariamman Temple which is three miles away form Thanjavur was built and consecrated by his Guru Sadasiva Brahmendral. Tukkoji was a scholar and patron of scholars like most eminent members of his dynasty. He was a musician and wrote a text of musicology. His musical work Sangita Saramirutam reveals his highly cultivated musical taste. He patronized the famous scholar Ghanasyama Pandita, whose whole family was reputed for its brilliant Sanskrit scholarship. Ghanasyama had two learned wives Sundari and Kamala. He is the author of the following works.

1.	Anyapadesa sataka	No. 8889
2.	Dasakumaracarita tippana	No. 4006
3.	Nilakanthavijaya campuvyakhya	No. 4061
4.	Sakuntalavyakhya - Sakuntasanjivani	No. 4309
5.	Madanasanjivana	No. 4587
6.	Candanuranjan	No. 4629
7.	Viddhasalabhanjika Vyakhya	No. 4676
8.	Anadasundari	No. 4681
9.	Navagrahacarita	No. 4689

His wives kamala and Sundari were the joint authors of Viddhasalabhanjika Vyakhya (No. 4675). The immediate successors of Tukkoji were Baba Saheb, Sujana Bai and Kattu Rajah (1736 – 1739 A. D.)

EKOJI – II alias BABA SAHEB (A. D. 1735 – 1737)

He succeeded his father and ruled for a year. During his period, Thanjavur was invaded and plundered by Chanda Saheb. There was a lieutenant of the army named Syed incharge of defending the fort. He worked his way into graces of the royalty and amassed sufficient influence to be able to make and break Kings. Faba Sahab died and he was succeeded by his wife Sujana bai and she ruled for two years. Now kattu Rajah, the pretender emerged from his obscurity; overthrew Sujana Bai, and seized the throne in 1738. Kattu Rajah ruled for a short time with the help of Syed and Chanda Saheb. But ultimately Chanda Saheb declared him an imposter.

PRATAPASIMHA (A. D. 1739 – 1763)

He was the last of great Rajahs of Thanjavur. Next to Venkoji, Shahaji and Serfoji his name stands prominent. He was good, intelligent, handsome and brave. To win the love of people and make his position stronger he allowed more Kudivaram to the ryots. His sprit of tolerance and love for his subjects can best illustrated by the mosque that he built in Nagore and endowed with fifteen villages. He had a keen insight into the changes of the men around him. It is who imprisoned Chanda Saheb, with the help of Maratha ruler in Satara. Pratapa purchased the English with the session of Devikottai but when the French took up the cause of the pretender, Pratap with the help of Manoji, his commander in chief fought and defeated them. He died on 16th December, 1763.

TULAJAJI (A. D. 1763 – 1787)

Tulajaji who ruled for a quarter of a century during a very disturbed period in the history of the Coramandal; paved the way for the fall of the dynasty. His reignal period began when the seven years war had just ended and Hyder Ali's cavalry attacks on the Carnatic had just started. The Nawab of Carnatic would not be content with anything less than the annexation of Thanjavur to his history. The influence of British in Thanjavur also become more and more pronounced. The combined forces of the East India Company and the nawab attacked and took Thanjavur in 1773 and Thanjavur was under Muslim rule till 1776. The Court of Directors in English questioned the conduct of East India Company at Madras in acting against Tulajaji, their friend and ally, and finally restored the Maratha king to the throne. After this restoration Thanjavur fell very much under the power of the English. The restored Rajah forgetting his recent humiliation wrote in gratitude with characteristic exaggeration. "Had I a Thousand tongues they could not express my gratitude to the company. The country is the company". His last days were clouded with calamities. He died at the age of 49. His children predeceased him. So he adopted Serfoji from collateral branch and agreed to brother's rule at regent until the boy came of age. The missionary Schwartz, a great friend of the Rajah, was also charged by him with the task of taking care of young Serfoji. He appointed Schwartz to educate the boy and make him fit to assume royalty in due course when he attained majority. In the meantime, he nominated his brother Amarsingh to act as regent of the minor prince and look after the affairs of the state.

AMARSING (A. D. 1763 – 1787)

Amarsingh was also called Ramasamy and was the product of morganatic marriage which Pratapasimgh had contracted. Serfoji II naturally cast aspersion on the birth of Amara who was a usurper according to it. The English who thought it prudent and advantageous to them to introduce changes in the relation of Tanjore with company each time there was a change in ruler in Tanjore, imposed a new treaty on Amarsingh in 1787. It was stipulated thereby that Amarsingh should make an annual contribution of four lakh Pagoda to the company and that it should vary with the revenues of the state that if punctual payment of the amount was not made to the company would be at library to make its own arrangement to collect the amount, and during war time 4/5 of the state revenue should be paid into the English treasury but the usual tribute should be suspended. The Rajah was also to pay an annual amount of three lakh of Pagodas due to the Navab and all the amounts should be to the English treasury. He was a titular ruler with no control over foreign affairs and burdened with financial duties beyond his capacity to discharge. His relation with Serfoji was never amicable. The supporters of Amarsingh advised him to appeal to the Governor of Madras, Sir Archibald Camphell to declare that Amarsingh was the legitimate heir to the throne not withstanding his low birth and that Serfoji was in no way entitled to the throne. The Governor consulted a number of Pandits in Thanjavur on these points. The pandits had already been bought off by Amarsingh and they unanimously and emphatically asserted that Amarsingh was the rightful heir to the throne and dismissed the claims of Serfoji. The hostality of Amarsingh towards Serfoji became

unbearable and Schwartz represented matters in effective language to Lord Cornwallis, the then Governor General. A thorough probe was made afresh and it was decided that Amarsingh was to be pensioned off and Serfoji should take over as ruler. Before these decisions could be implemented the great and noble Schwartz passed away.

SERFOJI – II (A. D. 1798 – 1832)

He was the adopted son of Tulaja II. He was mainly responsible for the development of Sarasvati Mahal Library and collected many manuscripts and books from Banares. He was himself a scholar and also patronized many scholars. He sent many pandits far and wide and collected many books and Manuscripts for this Library. The following works are ascribed to his pen.

1.	Kumarasambhaba Campu	No. 4030
2.	Mudraraksasa Chaya	No. 4473
3.	Smrtisangraha	Nos. 18483, 18493
4.	Smrtisara saamuchaya	No. 18499

Actually when Serfoji was raised to throne (1798) Wellesley was the Governor General. It was desired that he himself should initiate a new treaty with the English. The transfer of power occurred smoothly. Serfoji agreed to the treaty of 1792 and such other arrangements as were agreed upon for the honour and interest of both parties. Amarsingh was deposed in June 1798 and ordered to reside in Thiruvidaimarudur near Kumbakanam on pension of 2500 pagodas per year. Serfoji the

normal ruler of Thanjavur deprived of power but endowed with glitter, spent his time and energies on art and literature instead of on war and diplomacy. The choice, though imposed, was well made. The taste for westren learning he acquired from his association with Schwartz the missionary, for whom he erected a splendid monument in marble to the chapel at Thanjavur. He spoke English very well, and enlarged the big library at Thanjavur with printed books and manuscripts in many languages. According to Dr. A. C. Burnell who catalogued the books, it is one of the largest libraries with 22,000 volumes mostly in Sanskrit. The works found there represent all fields of literature, Vedanta, Grammar, Kavya, Music, Architecture, Medicine, Astrology etc. He preserved all the manuscripts and books for the benefit of posterity. A handsome and well built figure Serfoji was a popular prince. He was a lover of birds and owned good horses. Bishop Heber calls him a deadly shot and appreciated his emplcyment of Christians. Lord Valentia extols his good nature and polished manners. His collection of books and manuscripts in Sanskrit, Telugu, Modi and Tamil which goes by the name of the Thanjavur Sarasvati Mahal Library is monumental in reputation though not in numbers. He had a conqubine Mukthambal whose name he gave to a choultry at Orathanadu. He died on 1832. He was succeeded by his rather sickly son Shivaji II, who ruled from 1833-1855 A. D. The great Chola King Rajaraja built the famous temple of Thanjavur and made the stones to speak volumes of his adminstritaiton and munificient act, through the inscription over them. Further the great Maratha King Rajah Serfoji-II made inscription in Marathi language in Devanagari script in the temple to speek about the genealogy of Maratta dynasty of Thanjavur.

SHIVAJI (A. D. 1833 – 1855)

He was the only surviving son of Serfoji II. A pale and sickly child in the words of Heber, as a man he was noted for his physical and mental attainments. We have few dramas and panegyrics from his reign. This titular dignitary of Rajah became extinct on his death without heir. He left two daughters and no son when he died in 1855. Dalhousie's inexorable lapse swept away the regal diginity and everything. The decision of the Council that the lapse of all properties was an act of state was obviously with the Thanjavur Raj. Thus ended another dynasty which has ruled over Thanjavur. It went the way of the Nayak and Chola, when it lost its might, it lost its right to exist. The Marathas under Shivaji and his successors had evolved a system of administration which prevailed in Maharastra. The Marathas of Thanjavur did not introduce the typical Maratha administration in the conquered territory, but put a then veneer of their own innovations out to an essentially local set up. From Ekoji to Shivaji II, there were Kings and Kings; but their character and competence not only viewed widely but also were circumscribed by circumstances so much so that the best of them was not a Great King and the worst of them was not a cruel tyrant.



FROM VISITOR'S BOOK :-

It would take many life times to exhaust the treasure house of wisdom. It restores the self respect and pride of the nation to realise the manifold knowledge of the Hindu mind in every brand of the arts and sciences. This Library is among the greater treasures of the Indian people.

20th Oct, 1922 SAROJINI NAIDU

A visit to this Library is an education in itself. I was very deeply impressed by all I paid beer and was happy to have revived the old days again and lived for a moment in the creations of our great ancestries in art literature. I am grateful to the learned scholars who received me so warmly and explained to me so fully significance of all that is collected here. May a future generations avail themselves of the opportunities afforded by this treasure house of learning and beauty and make future worthy of the past.

October 27, 1953. Sri. PRAKASH,
(Governor of Madras)

I was very happy to had this opportunity of visiting this magnificent collection which I am sure to Quite unique.

4th January, 1955 Dr. KARAN SINGH
New Delhi

It is indeed tantalizing to be able to spend only a brief whole in this house of treasures and to have only a fleeting glimpse of manuscripts which invite hours and even days of leisurely examination. Even so, this visit has been a rewarding and an enriching experience. I sincerely hope it will soon be possible to provide better care for these priceless manuscripts and to arrange for them to be Micrographed.

22-6-1965

INDIRA GANDHI
Union Minister for
Information and Broadcasting.

It was a great privilege to be shown round this ancient and renowned library by so kind and courteous a guide as the librarian himself.

23-2-1969

DIANA WORDSWORTH,
(Descendant of the famous Poet Wordsworth)

Went round this unique institution again and was much delighted to see the new setting particularly of the exhibition material. The publications also are very useful though selective.

2-5-1969

K. R. SRINIVASAN
Retired Director,
Archaeological Survey of India.

I am particularly interested in the flower paintings executed by Serfoji's artists and would hope that the Sarasvati Mahal Library would publish these. They seem to be of the same collections as those of amimals and birds in the India Office published by Mr. Mildred Archer

19-7-1969

J. R. MARR,
School of Orintal and
African Studies,
University of Londen

I am happy to visit this library today a visit which I have been looking forward to for a long time. I feel this visit will serve as the starting point of a long and fruitful co-operation between this institution and the Andhra Pradesh Government in the great adventure of bringing out our treasures in literature and art. The Salarjung Museum in Hyderabad is the crowing work of a single nobleman in collection of pieces of Art. This Library, again, is the achievement of one scholar-king. Both are unique. The collections in this library are a graphic example of national integratrion. They are profoundly inspiring. My respectful felicitations to the great scholars of the library for their assiduous work.

P. V. NARASIMHA RAO,
Minister for Education,
Andhra Pradesh,
Hyderabad

17-8-1970

A superb and monumental relic of the literature and I ask of the great day of India's past. Open to all, and assembles to scholar throughout the world.

A marvelous place.

PAUL H. KRIESBERG
28-12-1976 American Embassy,
New Delhi.

A very interesting and impressive visit which demonstrated a true dedication to caring for a treasure-house of written culture. Grateful thanks to all concerned who took so much trouble to post myself and my colleagues.

JOHN E. Mc. INTYRE,
Head of Preservation
22-9-1989 National Library of Scotland.

Thank you for your helpful introduction to your rich historical collection of both printed and manuscript books. Your continuing publications are important contributions to knowledge over a wide range of subjects.

JOHN DURHAM
Department of Indian Studies,
University of Malbourns, Parkuille,
Victoria, 3052, Australia.

With kind regards, yours sincerly.

B. D. JATTI
Lieutenant Governor,
Raj Nivas,
Pondicherry.

One the best and valuable Library I have visited.

23-9-1990

SHARAD PAWAR,
Chief Minister Of Maharashtra,

Thank you very much for a most interesting tour of your priceless manuscript collectin. Please accept my best wishes for your continuation of this important work.

TIHOTHY P. HAVSER,
U. S. Consul General,
Madras.

2-9-1995

மாஸ்கோவிலிருந்து வந்த பல்கலைகலைக் குழுவினர் நூலகத்தை!' பார்த்துவிட்டு திரு. சிவஞானம் மற்றும் நூலகத்து ஊழியர்களுக்கும் மனமார்ந்த நன்றி கூறுகின்றனர். இந்தச் சிறந்த நிறுவனம் நீடு வாழ்க.

டாக்டர். டுபியானங்கி,
இர்ஷ்யா

25-1-2001


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